



## Bill Mandates South Fla. Reuse Wastewater

*Governor Says He'll Sign Wastewater Disposal Bill Into Law*

*Glenna Milberg, Local 10 Reporter*

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**MIAMI** -- South Florida counties and cities will have to stop pumping wastewater into the ocean and reuse most of it instead, under a bill that Florida lawmakers passed unanimously Wednesday.

Gov. Charlie Crist has said he will sign the Wastewater Disposal Bill into law.

For the last four decades, six pipes have pumped an average of 300 million gallons a day of South Florida's wastewater a few miles offshore. The bill stops that process by the year 2025 and mandates that Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties cleanse their wastewater more thoroughly and reuse it for landscaping and other non-potable needs.

Miami-Dade County's deputy chief at the Water and Sewer Department was among those who traveled to Tallahassee to tell lawmakers that the Wastewater Disposal Bill could impose unnecessary burdens on South Florida.

"We told them we've already accounted for the next 20 years of water needs," said Douglas Yoder. "We told them costs of meeting the requirements are significant, and we told them there is uncertainty about the environmental benefits."

Environmentalists have blamed the waste outflows for damaging fragile coral reefs, but scientists said offshore pollution has other sources, such as discharge from canals.

The city of Hollywood's director of public utilities said the cost to customers could eventually be more than double the state's projections.

"The bill will require utility customers to see an increase in their bills from \$50 to \$90 a month above and beyond what they're seeing now," said Albert Perez.

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